

Message Text

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44

ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 SP-02 L-01 INR-05

CIAE-00 SCCT-01 EA-06 SSO-00 INRE-00 PM-03 NEAE-00

PRS-01 /045 W

----- 016302

O 181612Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1997

AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY IMMEDIATE

SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 2727

LIMDIS

TOKYO FOR SECRETARY'S PARTY

USIA FOR INA

USCINCEUR FOR ECJ 2-O

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, SY

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE DISSENSION WITHIN SARG

1. EMBASSY RECEIVED INFORMATION TODAY SUGGESTING THAT,
COMPLETELY INDEPENDENT OF CURRENT WAR TALK, THERE MAY BE
NEW CRISIS WITHIN RULING GROUP. ACCORDING TO SOURCE,
RIFAT ASAD'S DEFENSE FORCE WAS PLACED ON ALERT LAST WEEK
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BECAUSE OF PRESIDENT'S FEARS OF GROUP OF SUNNI MOSLIMS

OPPOSING PARAMOUNT ROLE OF ALAWITES IN SARG.

2. SOURCE EMPHATIC THAT RECENT BOMBING OF G-2 OFFICE IN DAMASCUS WAS WORK OF THIS OPPOSITION GROUP WITHIN THE REGIME AND NOT OF ANY PALESTINIAN GROUP AS OFTEN ALLEGED. HE SAID GROUP WAS TRYING TO TELL REGIME THAT ITS DAYS WERE NUMBERED. SOURCE ADDED THAT PRESIDENT'S BROTHER, RIFAT ASAD, IS PERSON MOST SUNNIS HATE. THEY REPORTEDLY ENVY HIS POWER AND INFLUENCE AND BELIEVE HE HAS BEEN EXCESSIVELY GREEDY IN ACCUMULATING A PERSONAL FORTUNE. ACCORDING TO SOURCE, OPPOSITION GROUP HAS LOST HOPE THAT PRESIDENT ABLE TO CONTROL YOUNGER BROTHER.

3. IN SEPARATE COMMENT JORDANIAN AMBASSADOR REMARKED TO ME TODAY THAT "NOT ONLY ISRAEL MAY BE PROMPTED BY INTERNAL PROBLEMS TO CREATE DIVERSION ON GOLAN." HE COULD OFFER NO SPECIFICS TO JUSTIFY STATEMENT.

4. COMMENT: WHILE WE UNABLE TO CONFIRM THAT THERE IS CURRENTLY ANY NEW TROUBLE SUCH AS SUGGESTED ABOVE, WE HAVE OFTEN REPORTED ON SUNNI OPPOSITION TO ALAWITE REGIME. WE HAVE ALSO BEEN AWARE OF RIFAT ASAD'S UNPOPULARITY.
MURPHY

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 18 NOV 1974
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US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

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